

School IPM Outreach and Research Activities, NYS IPM Program, 2012 & 2013

Project Leaders: Lynn Braband, Jody Gangloff-Kaufmann, Jennifer Grant

Cooperators: Brain Eshenaur (NYS IPM Program). Frank Rossi, Jenny Kao-Kniffen, and Joann Gruttadaurio (Department of Horticulture, Cornell University). Monika Roth and Patricia Curran (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County), Tamson Yeh and Marie Camenares (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County). Elizabeth Poole and Laurie VanNostrand (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County), Russ Welser (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County). Julie Seghrouchni (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County), Walt Nelson (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County), David Chinery (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County). Mary Roy (NYS Department of Environmental Conservation). James Leach and Karen Wilson (NYS Department of Health). Carl Thurneau (NYS Education Department). Sandra Yorke (Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES). Jonathan Hark (Eastern Suffolk BOCES). Peter LaDuca (Nassau County BOCES), Andrew Ippolito (E2CC BOCES), Patty Cerio (Questar III BOCES). Yvette Gordon (Buffalo City Schools). Paul Alexander (Ithaca City School District). Andrew Ward (Seaford Central School District). Michael Siciliano (NYC Department of Education). Steven Panno (Babyon UFSD). Erik Karlund (Brentwood UFSD). James Saitta (North Merrick School District), Suzanne Wheatcraft (Rochester City School District). Robert Portness (Tully School District). NYS Association of Superintendents of School Buildings & Grounds. Nassau County Bed Bug Task Force. Carol Geddis (Catholic School Administrators Association of NYS). Kathy Murray, (Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources). Carol Westinghouse (Informed Solutions). Roger Young (Facilities Masters). School Dude. Members of the Northeast School IPM Working Group and the National School IPM Steering Committee.

Abstract: NYS schools need assistance in reducing risks to children and others from both pests and the overuse of pesticides. Over the past two years, NYS IPM Program activities have resulted in dozens of school districts and hundreds of school personnel becoming better informed and able to implement IPM in their school districts. Including in the context of the new “Child Safe Playing Fields Act.” Additionally, the NYS IPM Program has collaborated with partners throughout the northeastern United States and nationally toward the goal of having verifiable IPM in all of the nation’s schools by 2015. Efforts in the near future will include evaluating the current pest management needs of the state’s public schools and outreach to rural and non-public schools.

Background and Justification: Pest management in schools has received increased attention in New York State and nation-wide. This is due to the critical need to decrease pesticide use to protect our children, who, by nature of their size and developmental stage, are at greater risk than adults. Yet, at the same time, we cannot compromise the quality of pest control because pests represent an equally important health hazard. Schools are especially challenging to manage because they include such varied settings as classrooms, cafeterias, laboratories, auditoriums, theaters, playing fields, playgrounds, and gardens. These areas are heavily used for a variety of purposes, including after-hours public meetings. Visitors, staff, and students are frequently in direct contact with the lawns, athletic fields, flowers, trees, playgrounds, and buildings on the school grounds. The New York State (NYS) pesticide notification law and recently passed “Safe Playing Fields” act have resulted in additional pressure on schools to

reduce pesticide use. There is a concerted nationwide effort to have verifiable IPM in all of the country's schools by 2015.

School IPM Workshops and Demonstration Projects: Ten IPM workshops that targeted, wholly or partially, school personnel were organized throughout the state in 2012 and 2103. Additionally, we made school IPM presentations at seven workshops/meetings organized by other organizations within the state and at workshops in South Carolina, Maryland, and Rhode Island. NYS IPM Program staff provided input into the EPA, Region 2 webinar, "*Outdoor and Field School IPM*" and co-organized/presented a Facilities Masters webinar, "*Birds and Bats: Pest Management Tips for the Educational Environment.*" We worked on-site with eight different school districts on issues involving bedbugs, turf management (see below), cockroaches, yellowjackets, termites, and woodchucks. We partnered with BOCES districts and CCE associations to begin organizing IPM outreach to rural schools in southern, eastern, and (potentially) northern NYS. Separate funding has been received for this project. We also partnered with the Catholic School Administrators Association of NYS to begin planning IPM outreach to non-public schools.

As a result of this outreach, more than six hundred NYS school personnel are better informed and able to implement IPM in their schools including in the context of the state's new "Child Safe Playing Fields Act". Specific IPM-related practices that workshop participants indicated they plan to implement include overseeding, adjusting mower height, record keeping, stakeholder communication, irrigation, and IPM policy development. Over six hundred people registered for the bird and bat management webinar. After the webinar, we responded on-line to thirty-six questions raised by the participants. We also contacted fifty-five participants who indicated that they wished more information about the NYS IPM Program. Intensive interaction with a Long Island school district on a significant cockroach problem has resulted in improved building management. NYS IPM Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension staff also cooperated with a district on a project seeking to reduce yellowjackets in the vicinity of compost dumpsters.

School Grounds IPM

Education on the Child Safe Playing Fields Act (CSPFA) continues to be a need of NYS school grounds managers, as evidenced by recent discussions at the 2013 Turf and Grounds Expo and a School IPM Workshop in Fredonia, NY. Managers are still unclear about what is allowable under the law, and which options are effective. An article describing the law (nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/school_ban/files/school_ban_CUTT_2011.pdf), written by Jennifer Grant NYSIPM, continues to be a guiding document for managers. A fact sheet on herbicides allowable under the law (nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/allowable_herbicides/files/allowable_herbicides_schools.pdf), authored by Jenny Kao-Kniffin, is also a staple reference for managers.

NYS IPM and the Cornell University Turfgrass Team are further addressing the needs of school grounds IPM managers in the following ways:

- Hiring a turf, school and daycare IPM specialist, Joellen Lampman, housed in the capital district. She began in November 2013.
- Funding web development and posting of sports turf IPM information via a Community IPM funded grant to Frank Rossi and Joann Gruttadaurio
- Pursuing funding for a project for widespread demonstration and adoption of repetitive overseeding as a technique for reducing weed populations and improving field quality and safety

- Ongoing education on how to best manage school sports turf and grounds under the CSPFA
- Conducting and/or supporting research and demonstration on alternative herbicides for vegetation management at schools.

Statewide School IPM Committee: The NYS IPM Program organized a Statewide School IPM Committee in 2002. The eleventh meeting of the committee was held in November 2013 in East Greenbush, NY. Participants were from Cornell University, the DEC, state department of health, state education department, NYS Teachers Association, school districts, and industry. Presentations and discussions included the School IPM Cost Calculator (led by Texas A&M's Janet Hurley calling in), invasive species, and charter school outreach.

Statewide School IPM Survey: In 2001 and partnering with the NYS Health Department and the NYS Department of Education, the NYS IPM Program surveyed all of the state's public school districts and BOCES districts concerning their pest management policies and practices. The results have been helpful in guiding school IPM outreach activities. In 2011, we began planning a repeat of the survey in order to update this important database. The on-line survey was developed in 2012, promoted in 2012 and 2013, and distributed in 2013 and gathered information on pest management policies and plans, food policies, educational outreach and training, frequent pests, pest management techniques, turf management techniques, pest and pesticide-related complaints and incidents, pest management costs, Neighbor Notification Law, "Safe Playing Fields" Act, and sources of information. Analysis and distribution of the results will occur in 2014.

IPM Assessments of School Districts: IPM STAR documentation for two districts has been sent to the IPM Institute with recommendations for re-certification. A draft School IPM Assessment Tool was developed with the objective of using selected measures (metrics) that would allow assessors to obtain a good picture of a district's pest management program within a limited timeframe.

Northeast School IPM Working Group: A NYS IPM Program staff member serves as co-chair of this multi-state, USDA-funded group. In conjunction with the National School IPM Steering Committee and the other three regional working groups, we are organizing school IPM demonstration projects and state coalition projects. Funds from an EPA grant were used for school IPM outreach workshops (reported above) in New York State and for recruiting school districts in the state to participate in a nation-wide survey of asthma/IPM metrics in schools. The Working Group (WG) also recently finished a project assessing and expanding the impact of existing K-12 IPM teaching tools throughout the region <http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/school-ipm-curriculum/index.htm>. One outcome has been the draft of a K-12 IPM Literacy Strategic Plan. WG members received a NE IPM Publications grant to develop a school "environmental systems management" workbook that incorporates IPM. The workbook was piloted at workshops, including Vermont and New York. The ESM workbook may be found on the NE IPM Center's website <http://www.northeastipm.org/working-groups/schools/ipm-emp/>. On behalf of the WG, NYS IPM Program received an NE IPM Partnership grant to develop a school IPM Best Management Practices on-line document which will become available on the NE IPM Center's website in 2014.

The working group continued its monthly conference calls and decided to begin having special speakers as a "value-added" feature. The WG's annual meeting was held October 29 & 30 in Connecticut. We reviewed our 2013 accomplishments/status, began

revising the Northeast school IPM priorities and planned for 2014. With others in the National School IPM Steering Committee, working group leaders worked on an EPA funded project to develop standardized school IPM training and certification for school personnel.

Other Outreach: The NYS IPM Program funded eighteen Community IPM grants in 2012 and 2013. All had relevance for school IPM, and four directly included school audiences. These two were entitled:

- 1) "Alternatives to Pesticides Workshops for County, Municipal, and School Properties";
- 2) "Community Compost Education Project 2012";
- 3) "Sports Turf TAG (Turf, Athletic & Grounds) Team".
- 4) "Sports Turf Management Resource to Address Child Safe Playing Fields Act."

NYS IPM Program staff participated in meetings, organized by the NYS Department of Health and funded by the US EPA, of the Statewide School Environmental Health Program Steering Committee in May and September, 2013. The goal of this project is to promote sustainability and networking in promotion of school environmental health in NYS.